

Houston Parent-Child Development Program

Brief Program Description

The Houston Parent-Child Development program assists low income, Mexican-American families with 1- to 3-year-old children to help their children do well in school and foster intellectual and social competence. The program provides a wide range of educational and support services, delivers these services in ways that are responsive to the families' poverty, and is culturally sensitive. Program guidelines call for 1) working with children from birth to 3 years of age, 2) training mothers to be effective teachers of their children, and 3) providing comprehensive services to counter the effects of poverty. The program is structured in two stages. The first, beginning when the index child is 1-year-old, includes biweekly home visits to the mother and child, several weekend sessions for the entire family, English language classes for the mother, medical examination of the child, and assistance with accessing other community resources. In the second stage, mother and child participate in the Center's activities four mornings a week. Activities include homemaker lessons in sewing, buying strategies, and health and safety in the home. Group discussions explore ideas on childcare and management and provide mothers with the opportunity to interact with their children and practice the techniques discussed. The entire program requires about 500 hours of participant time over a 2-year period. The Houston Parent-Child Development program was effective in training mothers, as demonstrated through program and randomly assigned control group comparison, on several evaluation procedures. Program mothers were found to provide more appropriate play materials, be more emotionally and verbally responsive, and avoid restriction and punishment compared to mothers in the control group. For the children, significant differences were found on the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale when compared to the control group. A 4-year follow-up study indicated that program children were less destructive, overactive, negative attention-seeking, and more emotionally sensitive compared to control children. Various other studies showed similar significant results.

Contact Information

For indepth information on this program, please use the contact listed below.

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